GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNITY CONSORTIA

Alberta

ADVANCED EDUCATION

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR COMMUNITY CONSORTIA

INTRODUCTION

The Community Consortia were established in June, 1980 as part of the regional expansion program of government. The major role of Community Consortia is to provide a range of needed higher education credit programs in regions of the province not directly served by an advanced educational institution. This role is achieved through the cooperative efforts of post-secondary institutions and other agencies who deliver under the aegis of the Community Consortium needed credit programs and services.

The provision of programs by a Community Consortium is facilitated in several ways:

1. A Regional Advisory Committee works closely with a Board of Directors in determining and providing suggestions and recommendations with respect to the programming needs in the region served.

2. The capabilities of member institutions can be brought to bear to meet programming needs.

3. An onsight, full-time coordinator provides programming and managerial support to the institutions, the Regional Advisory Committee and the Board of Directors.

4. Funding in support of programming and administrative costs is provided from several agencies including Advanced Education.

The five Community Consortia in Alberta are located in the North Peace region of the province centered in the town of Peace River; the Yellowhead region centered in Hinton; the Pembina region centered in Drayton Valley; the Big Country region centered in Drumheller; and, the Chinook region centered in the Crowsnest Pass.

Because local circumstances vary and because Community Consortia have and will have different histories, unique circumstances should be considered and Community Consortia should tailor their structure and overall operation to suit their particular needs. The following guidelines are intended to provide a framework within which Community Consortia can function in an effective and efficient manner.

OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Board of Directors

1. **Role**: The Board of Directors of each Community Consortium is responsible for establishing the terms of reference which govern the overall operation of the Community Consortium. In consultation with Regional Advisory Committee members, Boards of Directors are responsible for determining program directions of the Community Consortium. Boards are responsible for disbursing funds allocated to the Community Consortium from all sources. The accountability of member institutions of a Community Consortium to their boards of governors or, in the case of provincially administered institutions, the Department of Advanced Education, is not preempted by their respective commitments to the Community Consortium.

2. **Administrative Agent**: One member institution will be identified as the Agent for the Community Consortium with respect to all legal and administrative matters. Government funds will be transferred to the Agent in trust for the Community Consortium operation. The Agent will maintain appropriate financial records for monies received and disbursed on behalf of the Community Consortium. Legal ownership of all furnishings, equipment, and any other property will reside with the Agent. The Agent will sign necessary legal documents on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Community Consortium. The Agent acts on the direction of the Board of Directors of the Community Consortium.

3. **Composition**: The Board of Directors is composed of chief executive officers or designates of the post-secondary institutions agreeing to become members of the Community Consortium. As circumstances may require, one or more members of the Regional Advisory Committee may represent that Committee on the Board of Directors. Such arrangements are made by the Board in consultation with the Regional Advisory Committee. One member of the Board of Directors will be elected by the Board to serve as Chairman for a specified term as determined by the Board.

Regional Advisory Committee

1. **Role**: Regional Advisory Committees provide ongoing information and suggestions to the Board of Directors and the Consortium Coordinator regarding program needs, educational interests and the availability of local resources in the communities served as they relate to the delivery of credit programs and courses. In addition, Regional Advisory Committees provide information and recommendations to the Board of Directors concerning the management and operation of the Community Consortium. Regional Advisory Committees identify what they consider as program priorities and the means by which, in their view, these priorities can be met. The Regional Advisory Committees

establish mechanisms to facilitate ongoing public input into the planning of Community Consortium activities. These mechanisms could include opportunities for interested citizens to make representations to the Committee, needs assessment surveys and so forth.

2. **Composition**: Members are volunteers living in the geographical region served by the Community Consortium. Members should be representative of social, business, cultural and educational interests as well as other occupational or professional interests in the community. Members should be interested in promoting the provision of post-secondary education. The Regional Advisory Committee should be of sufficient size to ensure that members feel they are able to provide meaningful input to the Board of Directors and that the Board of Directors feels it is receiving comprehensive information with respect to programming interests in the community. While the size of Regional Advisory Committees will likely differ for each Community Consortium, it is suggested that 10 to 12 individuals could well represent local interests. Other guidelines with respect to the composition of Regional Advisory Committees may be established by each Committee, in consultation with the Board of Directors.

3. **Changing Membership**: Usually, Regional Advisory Committees establish procedures which stagger terms and thus provide continuity in membership. From time to time, it will be necessary to fill vacancies on the Regional Advisory Committee. The procedure for doing so should be established by the Regional Advisory Committee in consultation with the Board of Directors. Local residents should be made aware of how they may apply or be nominated to serve on Regional Advisory Committees.

Consortium Coordinator

1. **Role**: The Consortium Coordinator will be appointed by the Board of Directors, in consultation with the Regional Advisory Committee, to perform programming, managerial, and administrative duties related to the overall operation of the Community Consortium.

2. **Location**: The Consortium Coordinator will be resident in the region served by the Community Consortium and will add considerably to the visibility and identity of the Community Consortium in the region.

3. **Typical Activities**: Assignment of specific duties is naturally the purview of the Board of Directors of the Community Consortium. It is likely that the Consortium Coordinator will facilitate linking the activities of the Community Consortium with those of other educational agencies in the region, such as local further education councils,and establish a positive image of the Community Consortium and member institutions with citizens in the region.

Community Consortium Committees

1. **Program Committee**: For each Community Consortium, a program committee has been established. This committee, which includes representation from the program staff of participating institutions, determines institutional programs which can respond to identified needs, provides advice and recommendations as to the timing and sequencing of programs and courses and identifies operating and capital (instructional equipment) requirements. This Committee works closely with the Community Consortium Coordinator and representatives of the Regional Advisory Committee in the development of the annual Community Consortium Program Plan.

2. Each Board of Directors establishes, as it deems necessary, committees of the Board to review, analyze and provide advice to the Board on various matters. Regional Advisory Committees follow a similar practice.

PROGRAM GUIDELINES

The major role of Community Consortia is to provide a range of needed higher education credit programs and, in certain circumstances, credit courses. In order that the major objective for Community Consortia is achieved and in recognition of the additional actual cost which may be incurred by an institution in delivering credit programs and courses through a Community Consortium, program funds have been provided. Each year, allocations in the form of conditional grants will be provided for the following purposes:

1. to deliver credit programs which lead to a certificate, diploma or degree offered by an institution participating in the Community Consortium and approved under the terms and conditions of the Program Coordination Policy.

2. to deliver a short term, employment related program which culminates in a particular certificate or credential being awarded by an institution participating in the Community Consortium or body that licenses any trade, vocation, occupation or profession and which leads to direct employment.

3. to deliver a credit course under the following circumstances:

   3.1. the courses must be articulated in a plan which:

      (a) allows for the winding down of a credit program after the approval term of the credit program has expired

      (b) will extend the range of electives beyond those approved in the credit program plan

      (c) will deliver a course from an existing program in a new location

   3.2. the course must be linked to a credit program of the delivering institution.

The impact of educational programs covered by other policies and regulations of Alberta Advanced Education will be taken into consideration in reviewing submissions for program support. This applies in particular to the normal teaching, research and community service activities of the institutions. As well, submissions from Community Consortia will be reviewed in light of the programming and funding guidelines and procedures of the Program Coordination Policy, the Innovative Projects Policy and the Further Education Policy.

The Community Consortium program grant is only one source of financial support which can be accessed for programs and services delivered by institutions under the auspices of a Community Consortium. Alberta Advanced Education encourages and, as appropriate, will facilitate those initiatives by the Boards of Directors of the Community Consortia which seek direct support and involvement of community groups and agencies, business and industry, departments of the provincial and federal governments, as well as other funding sources in the delivery of programs and services.

PROCEDURES

Various procedures which relate to the administrative and program aspects of Community Consortia are provided below. These are reviewed annually and amended as necessary in consultation with Community Consortia Chairmen of the Boards of Directors and Finance Officers of the Administrative Agents. It is the responsibility of the Community Consortia Coordinators to ensure that all institutional officials involved in the delivery of programs or courses under the aegis of the Community Consortia are aware of the procedures.

Program Review and Approval Procedures

1. On the basis of information gathered from various sources pertaining to program and service needs, priorities and trends, the Regional Advisory Committee, with the assistance of the Consortium Coordinator, the Program Committee and others, will develop and recommend to the Board of Directors of the Community Consortium a plan which outlines the credit offerings deemed necessary to be delivered by the member institutions.

2. The Board of Directors will review and amend as necessary the recommendations of the Regional Advisory Committee and thereby finalize the Program Plan for the Community Consortium.

3. Suggestions for the content and format of a Program Plan can be found in Appendix A. At the least, the Program Plan should contain:

   (1) a statement of the Community Consortium mission;

   (2) a priorized listing of credit programs and courses proposed for delivery; and

   (3) operating and capital budget estimates for each initiative.

4. With respect to determining a priorized listing of credit programs and courses to be offered, it is suggested that priorized lists be established for credit programs and for credit courses. In finalizing the Program Plan, these two lists should be integrated and, where a credit program is perceived to be of equal importance to a credit course, the program shall receive preference.

5. The Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Community Consortium will submit a finalized Program Plan to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Program Services Division by March 1st, of each year. This submission will include the Board of Directors recommendations as to (1) credit program and course priorities, and (2) program funding levels.

6. The Department will review the Community Consortium Program Plan and, as soon as possible, advise the Community Consortium, through the Chairman of the Board of Directors, of the decision and conditions of final approval, if any.

7. After final approval, the Chairman of the Board of Directors is required to advise the Assistant Deputy Minister, Program Services Division that the conditions of approval, if any, are acceptable.

Administrative Review and Approval Procedures

1. By May 30th of each year, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Community Consortium should submit to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Program Services Division, the administrative budget request (operating and capital) for the upcoming fiscal year. This request will be reviewed by the Department and included in the annual preparation of Departmental estimates.

Department officials are available upon invitation for consultation during the preparation of Community Consortium program plans and administrative budget requests.

Funding Procedures

Financial support for Community Consortia relates to program funding and administrative funding.

Program Funding

1. On the basis of the letter of final approval to the Chairman of the Board of Directors regarding the program plan for the Community Consortium, funds in the form of conditional grants will be transferred to the Administrative Agent in accordance with the schedule included in the letter of final approval.

2. Funds will be held in trust by the Administrative Agent and transferred to the institutions delivering the approved programs on the basis of mutually convenient arrangements as determined by the participating institutions.

3. Funds in support of approved programs offered by provincially administered institutions will be transferred to the appropriate institutional account directly by the Department.

4. Grants may be in the form of operating grants to cover actual costs associated with instructional salaries, travel, subsistence and related supplies. Payment of operating grants will be made provided that the minimum number of students registering in a credit program is 10. The Department will provide funds if only 8 students have registered in a program; however, programs with a registration of between 8-10 would need to be monitored closely to determine the advisability of subsequent year funding. With respect to the minimum number of students enrolling in a credit course, the policies of the delivering institution would apply as to whether there was a sufficient number to warrant offering the course.

5. Capital grants to purchase necessary instructional equipment may be provided. In the case of capital grants, equipment purchased will be the property of the Administrative Agent regardless of which institution delivers the program. Once the program ends and provided there is no further need to keep the instructional equipment, the Agent, on behalf of Community Consortium, may sell or otherwise dispose of the equipment. Any funds realized from such sale will be held in trust by the Agent for future Community Consortium purposes.

6. Operating grants will be paid three times during the year:

   (1) a start-up grant at the time of acceptance of final approval conditions;

   (2) a second advance may be made on the basis of an interim financial statement submitted by the Administrative Agent by February 1st of each year;

   (3) a final payment upon receipt of a final statement of expenditures.

7. Capital grants will be paid in a lump sum once the Department is notified that the final approval conditions, if any, have been accepted.

8. The Administrative Agent is accountable to the Board of Directors for the expenditure of all program funds. The use of conditional grants is subject to review by the Department and the Auditor General.

Administrative Funding

1. In the spring of each year the Assistant Deputy Minister, Program Services Division will confirm in writing to the Board Chairman of each Community Consortium the level of administrative support for the upcoming fiscal year. Operating and capital grants for the upcoming fiscal year will be specified at this time.

2. For each Community Consortium, administrative funding in the form of a conditional grant is provided annually to the Administrative Agent in trust for the Community Consortium to cover lease cost, leasehold improvements, salaries for Community Consortium staff, supplies and services and related administrative charges.

3. Allocation of these funds is determined by the Board of Directors of the Community Consortium.

4. The Administrative Agent is accountable to the Board of Directors for the expenditure of administrative funds. The use of conditional grants is subject to review by the Department and the Auditor General.

Further information regarding the implementation of the Community Consortia program can be obtained by contacting:

Director, Program Planning and Development
Program Services Division
Alberta Advanced Education
6th Floor Devonian Building, East Tower
11160 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 0L1

Telephone 427-5589

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APPENDIX A

SUGGESTED CONTENT AND FORMAT FOR A COMMUNITY CONSORTIUM PROGRAM PLAN

COMMUNITY CONSORTIA

PROGRAM PLAN

The following outlines a suggested format and the content requirements for a Community Consortium Program Plan. Including and updating this information on an annual basis, will facilitate its review by the Board of Directors and Alberta Advanced Education.

1. Completion of the following forms will provide an Executive Summary of the Program Plan:

   A. Community Consortia Activities Summary.
   B. Community Consortia Program Grant Priorities Summary.
   C. Community Consortia Program Grant Program Detail Form.

2. Information to be included in the Executive Summary:

   A. New or Continuing Credit Programs to be delivered.
   B. Credit Courses and other programs and services to be provided.
   C. Operating Resources required.
   D. Capital Resources required.
   E. Facilities requirements.
   F. Program, Budget and Facilities implications for programming extending beyond this fiscal year.

3. Background to the Plan:

   A. Statement of Community Consortium Mission.
   B. Unique Characteristics of Area Served by the Community Consortium.
   C. Program and Service Objectives for the next three-five years.

Although the essence of the Community Consortium Program Plan (as outlined above) could probably be expressed in up to 10 pages, the information that will be developed in the process of preparing the Plan could be extensive and useful in reviewing the Plan. This information may also be appended.